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5 July 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR:

[NIO-USSR-EE]

FROM:

[Chief, Soviet/East European Division]

SUBJECT:

CIA Agents in Soviet Custody

1. In connection with current research of CIA agents who may be alive in Soviet custody, our investigations indicate that the following two individuals may be in the Soviet Union, either in prison or after having served long prison sentences:

a. Leonid ZARINS, DPOB 28 August 1927, Priehule, Latvia. ZARINS left Latvia as a refugee in 1944, arrived in the U.S. in 1949 as an immigrant and premanent resident. In 1952 he was recruited by CIA and sent into the USSR on an intelligence mission. In 1957 the Soviets announced his apprehension and sentencing to 25 years imprisonment. ZARINS has a sister who is a physician in Berlin. At our request, she was contacted by a member of [] Base on 3 July 1978 and said she had heard indirectly of her brother from a Latvian acquaintance in November 1977. This acquaintance relayed only the information from another Latvian that the news about ZARINS "was not good." We are attempting to have ZARINS' sister get in direct contact with the Latvian emigre who had information on ZARINS in order to get a first-hand account.

b. Nikolai BALODIS, born 25 June 1916 in Kaceni, District Abrene, Latvia. Recruited by CIA in 1951 in Germany and dispatched in 1952 into Latvia (USSR). He functioned as a W/T operator and sent messages until ca 1956. Whether or not he came under KGB control during this period was never established. His arrest was announced by the Soviets in 1957 but we have no record of his sentence. BALODIS had an illegitimate son, born in Germany as Ogars KRONTHALS, on 7 October 1950. The natural mother died shortly thereafter and the boy was brought to the United States as an immigrant by BALODIS' sister, Mrs. Arvids Lidacis. Our files show that Mrs. LIDACIS resided in New York in the 1950's. We are

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currently attempting to get in touch with her to ascertain what she may know of BALODIS' current status.

2. Based on our file review, both ZARINS and BALODIS acted in good faith when undertaking missions as CIA agents into the USSR. ZARINS clearly served a lengthy prison sentence and may still be in prison. ZARINS' status as a U.S. permanent resident and the fact that BALODIS has a son in the United States underscore the moral responsibility we have to assist these men if ways can be found to do so.

cc: DDO
ADDO